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February 11, 2004

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WT 02-55 (Public Safety Interference in the 800 MHz Band)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am writing on behalf of the Uniformed Fire Fighters Association to call the Commission's attention to public safety radio interference – a growing problem affecting emergency services personnel and those who rely on the services that they provide.

Across the United States, public safety groups including fire, medical, police and emergency services groups, are being affected by 800 MHz interference, which is characterized by the inhibition or prevention of radio signal reception. This problem occurs because public safety channels are intermingled among and adjacent to commercial channels. As you well know, clear communication can be critical, especially in a life-threatening situation.

The members of the Uniformed Fire Fighters Association support a proposal known as The Consensus Plan to resolve this problem of radio signal interference. The Consensus Plan would virtually eliminate interference to public safety communications systems and private wireless systems operating at 800 MHz, by realigning the current jumbled licensing of 800 MHz blocks. In addition, the Plan would require no federal, state or local funding to implement.

The Consensus Plan is the only plan before the FCC that would both proactively solve the problem of interference and provide additional spectrum for future public safety communications needs. The Commission has had two years to study the issue. We urge you to make a swift decision on this very critical matter. Two years is too long when one considers the consequences of delaying this important decision.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

James M. Slevin
Vice President